

February 26, 2020

Section II

• 2020 Horizons

A progress edition of The Clinton Chronicle

The People of Laurens County



Stronger families Thornwell cares for entire family

By Vic MacDonald

Editor

We know Thornwell from a past perspective – as an orphanage. Later, we came to know this Clinton icon as “a home” – a place where hurting children came to find healing, to get grounded – sometimes to go back home, sometimes to age-out and sometimes to make it on their own.

Families have changed; yes, children sometimes become “orphans”. But more prevalent these days is the fact that children get swept up in circumstances like mental health, addiction, and neglect. There’s no way to care for the child, without caring for the entire family. THAT, is Thornwell of the 21st Century – believing in a world where everyone belongs to a thriving family. Whether providing the safety and security of a place to call home, reuniting families after crisis, or finding a forever home for a child who has no one to care for them. Thornwell has kept the faith of its mission of healing and hope. Its reach extends well beyond Clinton; it provides services in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Renovations are going on there now. The Thornwell Family is bringing back The Farm. More details will come later.

“We are not just a children’s home,” said Kirstin Bolt, director of marketing and communications. “While we continue to have family-like Residential Care, we have a complete Continuum of Care to serve children and families at every stage of life.”



4K Graduation

Included also are Foster Care, Child Development, Education, Family Engagement, and Transitional Living services.

“The world around us has changed,” Bolt said. Staying true to Dr. Jacobs’ vision, with a guide to the future in current president, the Rev. Elliott Smith, the Thornwell staff strives every day to build up strong families. “parenting is one of the hardest things we’ll ever do but we know that when a family gains access to loving support, resources, and care, it can change everything,” said Bolt, the mother of two children herself. “We recognize a child in need is usually a family in need.”

Today’s Thornwell Home for Children provides services to more than 3,000 people – all from the gray-stone-buildings on South Broad Street in Clin-

ton, South Carolina.

In one of the 14-week Strengthening Families cycles, the staff worked with a grandmother, mother and child. The grandmother opened up to her daughter – “I wish I had known all this when you were coming along.” Some of what families learn are practical skills – can’t get a 5K child up and out the door for school in the morning, a Building Families professional will meet with you in your own home – to work with that child along with the mom, parents, grandparents or guardian.

“Just like therapy, training, and support are critical to building strong families, education is critical to building strong futures,” Bolt said. Often, children at Thornwell have bounced from school to school (due to the nature of foster care) – educators meet

them where they are, find ways to engage and empower through personalized learning. “That’s why education is so important to us. It gives them ownership, and hope for the future,” Bolt said.

Thornwell works closely with Foster Care – South Carolina desperately needs “people willing to open their homes to children in need, we help them know, ‘you are not alone in this.’” The help can take many forms – training, family fun days, meals, expert support. “Our families have 24/7 access to professionals who serve as a family support, Department of Social Services liaison, and take care of logistics – like hunting down a Medicaid card. We want to lift the burden from our foster families, so they have time and space to love the kids in their home.”

At any stage, Bolt said, “We come along side, really unlike anyone else.”

They are a support to families in the Clinton community and invite you to get involved. Contact Jill Gibson, 864-938-2739, to learn more about programs available in Clinton, to take a campus tour, or to learn how you can serve. Today’s Thornwell is accessible on all social media and at www.thornwell.org

(The Thornwell Board of Directors members for South Carolina are: Julius J. Anderson, Gordon E. Bondurant, the Rev. Dr. Ella F. Busby, Kay Cleveland, Anthony Dawson, the Rev. Dr. Charles Elliott, M. Craig Garner Jr., Harriet D. Ike, Teresa D. Madden, Susan W. Malloy, Jim Morton, Dorianne Norwood, Dr. Michael W. Payne and Maury Purcell.)



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Danny Verdin

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Can you imagine a world where everyone belongs to a thriving family?

Together, we can! That's why everything we do is in service of building up strong families. When families have access to loving support, resources, and care, it can change everything. And thriving families change everything!



A legacy of hope and healing.

For nearly a century-and-a-half, Thornwell has met the call for help from society's most vulnerable—its children and families in need. Today, we continue with the same spirit of hope to equip, train, and empower children and families to strengthen their relationships and live their best lives together.

We help children and families.

Thornwell is "Building Tomorrow's Families", and that begins with nurturing and strengthening the family unit.

Our first and primary goal is to ensure that the children and families we serve receive the immediate attention they need to overcome emergency situations. We further assist that child and their family with ongoing services to help them heal and become whole again.

The need is great!



South Carolina ranks **39th** in child well-being.



62% of South Carolina adults reported an adverse experience as a child.



Children and adolescents with foster care experience are diagnosed with PTSD at twice the rate of U.S. war veterans.

We provide a continuum of care.

Family changes everything in a child's life, so we address the welfare of children not as a singular event, but as a comprehensive, ongoing cycle of services and support designed to help children and families.

Foster Care – We help place children who have no relatives to care for them with loving families who can provide the security and shelter of a stable home.

Residential Care – We provide a safe family-like setting where children can recover from trauma and disruptions while their family copes with a crisis.

Child Development Services – We provide nurturing care and educational support to children, including pregnant and teen moms, to support healthy futures for kids.

Academic Services – We provide essential education support that addresses distinct learning gaps and provides personalized learning for children and families.

Family Engagement – We offer several highly-personalized programs to teach parents important skills and coping tools that help them build a stable family and strengthen it over time through love and support.

Transitional Living Services – We help young people on the verge of adulthood adjust to an independent life outside the foster care system with housing, life skills education, and workforce preparedness resources.



We rely on a community of support.

Thornwell could not do what we do without a greater community of child welfare advocates, including staff, volunteers, generous donors, and foster families across the states in which we operate. **Contact us to find out how you can be part of our community of support.**

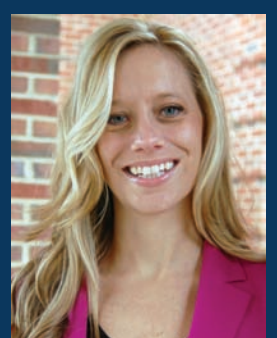
When families heal, our communities heal.

Together, let's unite to strengthen families and build up the community of Laurens County.

- Donate** Click 'Donate' at Thornwell.org to make a difference today!
- Tour** Contact us to schedule a campus tour and learn how you can be part of our community of support.
- Volunteer** Contact us to learn how you and your group can serve.
- Join Us** Follow us on social media to receive the latest ministry updates and to learn about upcoming classes and events!

Jill Gibson
Vice President
for Mission Advancement

864.938.2739
Jill.Gibson@thornwell.org



Thornwell.org



Thornwell
BUILDING TOMORROW'S FAMILIES

PC School of Pharmacy

School of Pharmacy welcomes new dean

Dr. Kurt Wargo began his new role as the dean of the Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy on February 1.

“It is certainly an exciting time to join the PC School of Pharmacy with so many positive things happening,” Wargo said. “I look forward to leading the school into our next phase.”

Wargo had served as the interim dean of the Wingate University School of Pharmacy since August before coming to Clinton. Before serving as interim dean, he had served as the regional dean for Wingate’s pharmacy school campus in Hendersonville since 2015. Wargo also taught in Hendersonville, first as an associate professor and then as a full professor, while serving as regional dean.

Strategist, advisor, collaborator

Wargo brings significant experience in administration, fundraising, enrollment management, student retention and student success to his role as dean of the PC School of Pharmacy.

During his tenure as Wingate’s interim dean, Wargo was a strategist, advisor, and collaborator to stakeholders to help advance the university’s mission. He led the pharmacy school’s strategic planning, as well as advising their curriculum revision and self-study.

He also devised a plan to create a pipeline of students at the Wingate pharmacy school. Wargo collaborated with middle schools, high schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities to increase students’ interest in pursuing a degree in pharmacy.

“It is our responsibility to garner interest within both the youth, and their parents, in the possibility of earning a doctorate degree in as little as six years upon graduation from high school,” Wargo said.

A Plan to Help the School Grow and Students Succeed

Wargo helped expand the Wingate University’s physician assistant studies program to enroll more students on the Hendersonville campus. He also chartered the development of an advisory board for the campus. The board is comprised of recognized leaders in business, public service, education, healthcare and philanthropy. Wargo chartered the board’s development to provide leadership and guidance to create mutually beneficial partnerships for the university.

In addition, Wargo developed a student success initiative for all first-year students at the university.

“The goal was to develop a comprehensive package that bridges math and science knowledge gained in undergraduate education to the rigors of a doctoral professional school,” Wargo said. “The program was also designed to focus on soft-skill development such as time management, self-awareness and resilience. These often need further development in incoming students.”



Dr. Kurt Wargo began his position as Dean of the Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy on Feb. 1. He had served as Interim Dean of the Wingate University (NC) School of Pharmacy, since August, prior to his position in Clinton. Wargo has presented research in pharmacy conference throughout the United States.

A Leader in the Pharmacy Community

Wargo is a member of many pharmacy organizations, including the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and the American College of Clinical Pharmacists. He has also been published in the NAPLEX Review Guide and a number of pharmacy journals. Wargo has presented his research in pharmacy conferences across the country.

Wargo spent the early part of his career as a pharmacist and professor. He began his career as an assistant clinical professor from 2003 to 2009 at Auburn University’s Harrison School of Pharmacy. While there, Wargo was promoted to the associate clinical profes-

or rank until he joined Wingate in 2015. He also served as an internal medicine pharmacist at the University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Medicine from 2003 to 2015.

Wargo graduated magna cum laude from the Creighton University School of Pharmacy in 2002. He earned his bachelor’s degree in biology, graduating cum laude, from Kent State University in 1997.

Wargo is married to his wife of 18 years, Nikki. They met while in pharmacy school at Creighton and now have three children: Hannah, 15, who enjoys playing violin; Lauren, 13, whose passion is soccer; and Ethan, 9, who loves baseball.

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Care for the Community

For more information please visit our website at pharmacy.presby.edu or call 864.938.3900.

PC Alumna named first woman to receive SC Bar award

The South Carolina Bar Association has recognized Whitney B. Harrison '07, of McGowan Hood & Felder LLC, as the 2019 Trial and Appellate Advocacy Award recipient.

The award recognizes members of the Bar who have demonstrated substantial dedication to the furtherance of the art and techniques of trial and appellate advocacy in South Carolina, outstanding and exemplary skill and conduct in their practice of advocacy, and have devoted substantial time and effort to the education and training of lawyers.

Harrison is the first woman to receive the award.

"Presbyterian College and (former PC president) Dr. John V. Griffith, along with many of PC's outstanding faculty, greatly shaped my perspective on advocacy and the ability for each one of us to make a difference — no matter our station in life or profession," Harrison said.

While practicing law for less than a decade, Harrison has tried several medical malpractice cases to verdict with the partners of McGowan, Hood & Felder, LLC, including obtaining a verdict of \$13.75 million. She has been associated by outside counsel to assist with numerous complex motions and trials.

Harrison has served as lead appellate counsel on more than thirty appeals before the South Carolina Court of Appeals and South Carolina Supreme Court. Issues range from constitutional challenges to corporate governance to novel issues.

In nominating her for this award, Harrison's colleagues shared that her story is like that of the three masons, "Whitney's passion for the law and her legal work shines through her in every interaction she has — whether she is working long hours on a brief or taking one of her many mentees to coffee. Whitney views her role as an advocate



Whitney B. Harrison

with great reverence and lives each day with one goal in mind — to help build legal cathedrals that will ensure justice for generations."

After graduating from PC, Harrison went on to earn her law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 2010. Before joining McGowan, Hood & Felder, LLC, Harrison clerked for the Honorable Aphrodite K. Konduros, Judge of the South Carolina Court of Appeals, and later as a law clerk for the Honorable Kaye G. Hearn, Justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina. Harrison has served as adjunct professor at PC, where she taught constitutional law.

Harrison is highly active in her community, serving on the Board of SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center and the SC Bar Foundation and supporting organizations such as MIRCI, who work with the community's most vulnerable population.

PC welcomes new Vice President for Finance and Administration

Jeff Scaccia, PC's new vice president for finance and administration, has been in Clinton for about a year now.

"We are excited about Jeff becoming a part of the leadership team at PC," PC President Bob Staton said. "He is a strong leader with a breadth of experience at the University of the Ozarks, a school similar to PC."

Scaccia comes to PC from the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Ark., where he served as vice president for finance and administration since 2013. Scaccia served as chief financial officer at the University of the Ozarks from 2004 to 2013.

During his tenure at University of the Ozarks, Scaccia had responsibility for finance, information technology, physical plant, as well as other areas of the college's operation. Scaccia was also active in a number of community organizations and the Arkansas Association of College and University Business Officers.

"During my tenure (at the University of the Ozarks), I had the pleasure to witness on a daily basis the impact an institution of higher education has on its students' lives," Scaccia said.

"I am drawn to the opportunity to serve another long-



Jeff Scaccia

standing institution and to the mission of developing students for a lifetime of personal and vocational fulfillment."

Before his career in higher education, Scaccia, a CPA, worked in public accounting and as an internal auditor from 1995 to 2004.

Scaccia earned a bachelor's degree in business administra-

tion from the University of Central Arkansas in 1995 and earned an MBA from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 2002. He graduated from the Harvard Institute for Educational Management in 2015.

Scaccia and his wife, Amy, have three sons: Jack, Trevor and Cooper.

PC's new Director of Athletics has settled into the community

Robert Acunto brings more than 20 years of intercollegiate athletic experience to the position as PC's new Director of Athletics. He most recently served as senior associate athletic director for development and external relations at the University of Texas at El Paso.

"We are excited that Rob is bringing his broad base of experience and leadership to the PC athletic program," President Staton said.

While at UTEP, Acunto led and coordinated all external relations for the intercollegiate athletic department. He managed all departments that focused on athletic development, broadcasting, marketing and promotions, season ticketing, and graphic design and video production. He also supervised the football and men's golf programs.

"The opportunity at PC fits what I've been looking for," Acunto said. "I'm excited about serving as the athletic director at a small, private liberal arts college that has an outstanding academic program."

"Thank you to President Staton and the search committee for the opportunity to serve on PC's leadership team and help execute the Promise of PC."

Acunto served in the athletic department at The Citadel for eight years before his tenure at UTEP. He became the assistant athletic director for compliance and academic services at The Citadel in 2010 before ultimately serving as interim director of athletics from December 2017 to July 2018.

As interim AD, he served on The Citadel's executive leadership team and financial review board and led the intercollegiate athletic department. He also helped develop the initial draft of a comprehensive six-year strategic plan focused on cadet-student-athlete development and academic achievement, competitive excellence, and fiscal sustainability.

Before The Citadel, he served as assistant commissioner for business and internal opera-



Robert Acunto

tions for the Atlantic 10 Conference. And for more than five years, he served as assistant and associate director of athletics for compliance at American University in Washington, DC. While at American University, he also served a year as interim director of athletics and recreation.

He graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Bryant College in Smithfield, Rhode Island. He earned a Master of Education from Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts.

He and his wife, Jennifer, who is an operating room nurse, have been married for seven years. They enjoy spending time together as a family, which also includes one dog and two cats. Rob and Jennifer have enjoyed becoming a part of the PC and Clinton communities.

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Multicultural Community Center to be developed from former KKK Museum

Inspired by the film **BURDEN - 101 Studios** and the **New Beginnings Baptist Church** have come together to renovate the space

LOS ANGELES, CA – 101 Studios and the New Beginnings Baptist Church announced their partnership to renovate the Echo Theater in South Carolina with the aim to bring positivity and inclusion to a previously prejudiced establishment. As seen in the film *Burden*, the Echo Theater has come to be known as one of America's most famous white supremacist shops. Through this partnership, 101 Studios and the New Beginnings Baptist Church will convert the museum into a center of religious, cultural and racial reconciliation.

The Echo Theater, also known as the "Redneck Shop" to locals, was established in 1996 and housed the KKK Museum until 2012. In 2012, upon the shop owner's death, the New Beginnings Baptist Church and the Reverend David Kennedy legally took full possession of the museum. In honor of *Burden* being released in February 2020, 101 Studios and the New Baptist Missionary Church are partnering to rebuild the space so that it becomes a center of positivity for the first time in its history. National and local partners, such as Lowe's, are working with 101 Studios and the New Baptist Missionary Church to contribute supplies and materials to the renovation efforts.

Burden tells the story of when a museum celebrating the Ku Klux Klan opens in a small South Carolina town, the idealistic Reverend Kennedy (Academy Award®-winner Forest Whitaker) resolves to do everything in his power to prevent long-simmering racial tensions from boiling over. But the members of Kennedy's congregation are shocked to discover that his plan includes sheltering Mike Burden (Garrett Hedlund), a Klansman whose relationships with both a single-mother (Andrea Riseborough) and a high-school friend (Usher Raymond) force him to re-examine his long-held beliefs. After Kennedy helps Mike leave behind his violent past, the Baptist preacher finds himself on a collision course with manipulative KKK leader Tom Griffin (Tom Wilkinson). In the

face of grave threats to himself and his family, the resolute Kennedy bravely pursues a path toward peace, setting aside his own misgivings in the hopes of healing his wounded community. From Oscar®-nominated filmmaker Robbie Brenner (Dallas Buyers Club) and writer/director Andrew Heckler comes this dramatic true story of compassion and grace in the American South.

"The Echo Project is so important because of the long history of racism and segregation in this area," said Reverend David Kennedy. "As shown in *Burden*, the Ku Klux Klan created a museum of hatred, racism, and injustice in The Redneck Shop. Now, it will become something entirely different: a space where anyone regardless of creed, color, or religion will feel comfortable. A place where diversity is not just talked about, but it is celebrated. The history of this property is long and tortured, but I'm grateful that it's finally being told and that we're finally making a change for the better. Any donation would help us do that for our community."

"After chasing this story for twenty years, it was a dream come true to be able to tell this tale of bravery, tolerance and hope," said director Andrew Heckler. "I am honored to be able to put to use the lessons born out of *Burden* into practice and be a part of the team to help turn a place steeped in hatred, bigotry and racism into a center celebrating tolerance, community and love."

To donate funds to help with the restoration process, visit: www.rehabhate.com For those who also Tweet a message of unity with #RehabHate - a donation and brick will be placed in their name at the Echo Theater.

Burden stars Forest Whitaker, Garrett Hedlund, Andrea Riseborough and Usher Raymond and will be in theaters on February 28th, 2020.

About 101 Studios:

101 Studios is a global entertainment company dedicated to the acquisition, financing, development, production and distribution of high-caliber, creator-driven storytelling. The studio empowers content creators through first-class collaboration and innovation. Inaugural release was Alfonso Gomez-Rejon's *The Current War: Director's Cut*,



National representatives of the Bernie Sanders for President campaign joined with The Rev. David Kennedy, of New Beginnings Baptist Church, Clinton, for a tour of the now-vacated Echo Theater in downtown Laurens. The building is envisioned as a racial reconciliation center for the Laurens community and the United States.

starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Michael Shannon. Upcoming releases include Sundance Audience award winner *Burden* featuring Forest Whitaker and Garrett Hedlund and the Russo Brothers acclaimed film *Mosul*. On the television side – 101 works side-by-side with Taylor Sheridan on his hit series for Paramount Network *Yellowstone*, starring Kevin Costner as well as Sheridan's upcoming series *Mayor of Kingstown*.

About New Beginnings Baptist Church:

New Beginning Missionary Baptist Church works to educate, feed, clothe, shelter, spiritually awaken, and encourage the people of God to stand against evil and the injustices inflicted upon them. We hope to economically strengthen and uplift holistically God's people while ministering to their needs, following God's word as recorded in Isaiah 61:1-3 and Matthew 28:19-20



CURRENT MEMBERS OF LAURENS ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.: (from left to right) Amithy Burgess, Adrienne M. White, Melissa Kirk, Shirley Jefferson, Alison Clark Moore, Prondolyn Copeland, Marian Miller, Jacquelyn Thompson, Bessie Williams, Susan Calhoun Ware, MaryAnna Moore (not pictured: Elaine Beagle Mangrum, Alicia Thomas, Shenese Merrill Gilmore, Sheila McDaniel, Ann Childs, Margurette McDaniel)



2020-2021 LAURENS COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER CURRENT OFFICERS: MaryAnna Moore, Bessie Williams, Prondolyn Copeland, Alison Clark Moore, Marian Miller, Susan Calhoun Ware, Jacquelyn Thompson

The Laurens Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Inc.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is an organization of college educated women committed to the constructive development of its members and to public service. Founded on January 13, 1913 at Howard University, the sorority now has over 940 chapters throughout the United States and worldwide with more than 300,000 members in locations as far as Liberia and South Korea to Laurens County, SC.

The current National President and CEO is Beverly E. Smith.

The Sorority has a five point programmatic thrust under which the Sorority fulfills its mission and philanthropic efforts. Those are: economic development, educational development, international awareness and involvement, physical and mental health, and political awareness and involvement.

The Laurens Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Sorority, Inc. is the 699th chapter and was chartered on May 1, 1982. This chapter is part of the South Atlantic Region of the Sorority in which Juanita Massenburg is the Director. The Laurens Alumnae Chapter covers the cities of Laurens and Clinton and the surrounding municipalities within the county of Laurens. The charter members are: Wanda Anderson, Susan Calhoun (Ware), Mary Clark, Shirley Jefferson, Ethel T. McDaniel, Elma S. Madden, Cheryl Neely (Pulley), Sarah Neely, Jacquelyn Thompson, Gwendolyn Blakely, Barbara Copeland and Anna T. Mims.

Current members and officers are: Alison Clark

Moore (President), Prondolyn Copleand (Vice President), Marian Miller (Treasurer), MaryAnna Moore (Financial Secretary), Susan Calhoun Ware (Secretary), Jacquelyn Thompson (Sergeant-At-Arms), Bessie Williams (Chaplain), Shirley Jefferson, Elaine Beagle Mangrum, Adrienne M. White, Shenese Merrill Gilmore, Alicia Thomas, Amithy Burgess, Melissa F. Kirk, Margurette McDaniel, Sheila McDaniel and Flossie Childs.

Under the direction of the mission and directives set by the Founders and national leadership, the Laurens Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. has diligently worked since its inception in projects both locally, statewide, nationally and internationally including the following: Habitat for Humanity, the Dr. Betty Shabazz Delta Academy, book presentations to newborns, awarding of scholarships, partnership with the American Heart Association, donations to the SAFE Home of Laurens County, focus on breast cancer and domestic violence, donations to and exercise sessions with the residents of the Laurens Memorial Home, Delta Days in the United Nations and the Nation and the State's Capitals, voters registrations drives, provision of meals and gifts for families in need for the holidays books for students in overseas countries and care packages for military members. The Laurens Alumnae Chapter may be small in number but is committed to providing programs, support and assistance to all within its reach thus fulfilling the goals and mission of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

38 years of service



LAURENS COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER MEMBERS OF DELTA SIGMA THETA, INC. at the Statewide Fall Meeting (top row from left to right) Elaine Beagle Mangrum, Melissa Kirk, Shirley Jefferson, Adrienne White; (bottom row from left to right) Marian Miller, Alison Clark Moore, Prondolyn Copeland, Bessie Williams

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Lady Blue Hose Community-built Team

By Zoe Montague '20

For The Chronicle

The small-town life of Clinton is nothing new for Presbyterian College's Women's Basketball Coach Alaura Sharp. She was born and raised on a pig farm in southeast Kansas, where she was a three-sport athlete in high school. Sharp played basketball and volleyball, and she ran track.

"Basketball has been part of my life forever," Sharp said. "I started playing in second grade, but I have two older sisters that both played, so I really started playing in the backyard with them when I was three."

She played college ball at Southwest Minnesota State University. It was Sharp's coach here who had the biggest impact on her future.

"I went to college to be an athletic director, but found it hard to get jobs immediately in that field," she said. "My college coach, Coach Kruger, had taken a new job in Colorado and called and offered me a volunteer coaching position. I said yes to his offer and moved across the country to a place sight unseen for a salary of \$3,000."

Sharp worked as a volunteer assistant coach for two years before becoming the head coach at Lamar Community College when she was just 24 years old. She quickly moved to head coach at Garden City Community College. She spent four years building the program, making her the coach with the most wins in the team's history.

Before coming to PC, Sharp also coached at the University of Southern Mississippi and Louisiana Tech.

Sharp came to PC in the spring of 2018.

"My name was given to the former AD, Danny Sterling, as someone to look at for the job here," Sharp said. "He reached out to me and my professional goal was to be a Division One head coach, so it honestly was a dream come true for me."

Her on-campus interview sealed the deal.

"When I came on my interview here, the people were great and it felt like the right opportunity for me," Sharp said. "The people make a place and I truly believe that you can be successful in that kind of environment."

Sharp and the team try to give back to the community.

"I am committed to PC and the Women's Basketball program, and am passionate about impacting the community. Our program wants to make a difference and the more we can impact others, the better our program will be," she said.

"We do a free basketball camp every summer for the community," Sharp said. "It is a great opportunity to put a basketball in the hands of



The Presbyterian College Women's Basketball Team: "We are sticking to the process of developing as people and basketball players. My purpose every day is to positively impact each and every person in our program." Alaura Sharp, head coach.

the youth and to build relationships with the families in our community."

The team has also read to students at local elementary schools and served at the food bank.

Recently, the team put on an education game in which more than 300 local students were able to attend for free.

"We teamed up with the SC Empowerment Center and have done several different projects with them," Sharp said. "In fact, they selected our team for their annual SC Empowerment Visionary Award, which goes to organizations who get behind and support their vision."

Sharp believes that Clinton community members should try to catch a game.

"I think community members should attend our games because of the way our players represent themselves in a first class manner," she said. "They play extremely hard and with a lot of passion. They represent PC and the community with class and integrity."

Recently, over half of the team was honored for achieving a GPA

of 3.0 or higher during the Fall Semester.

"The game atmosphere has really improved over the last year and I think families and community members would enjoy the experience," Sharp said.

Sharp plans to continue to grow the program.

"We are sticking to the process of developing as people and basketball players," she said. "My purpose everyday is to positively impact each and every person in our program."

She wants to make Templeton Gym the toughest place to play in the Big South Conference.

"One of the visions I have for this program is to pack Templeton for every home game," Sharp said.

The Blue Hose are finishing out the second half of their season with four more games before they enter March Madness tournament play. Sharp hopes to see the community show up to help to pack the Templeton Center on March 4th for Senior Night and their last home game of the regular season.

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Millers Fork Trail



Almost ready to hike

The City of Clinton, Clinton Canopy, Laurens County Trails Association and partners have developed the Millers Fork Trail, off the frontage road between Hwys 72 and 56 east of Clinton. In October, 2019, the city council got this project back on track with a \$12,700 appropriation from the hospitality and accommodations tax (designed to promote tourism). That allowed the \$111,800 low bid to be approached with an already approved \$99,000 SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism grant; deadline to use the money was Jan. 3, 2020. The City has a policing agreement with the Laurens County Sheriff's Office. Some trail areas are a little muddy right now - one part goes through a giant pipe and on to the small shoals; from the other part, hikers can see the traffic of I-26, the east-and-west backbone highway of South Carolina. Photos by Vic MacDonald



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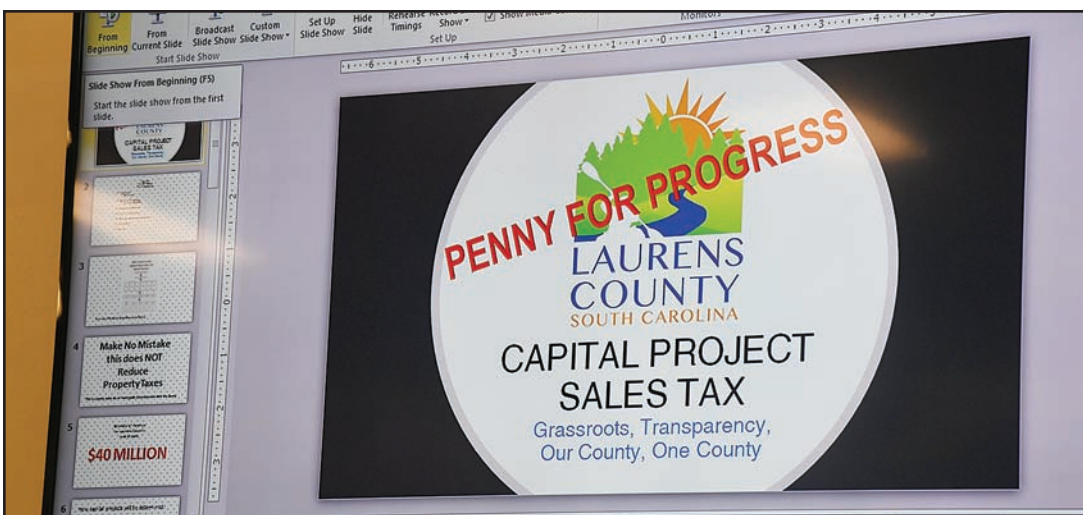
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Progress



This is the under-development site of QT (Quik Trip) convenience store and truck stop on Hwy 72, at I-26, east of Clinton. Annexation for this property was completed Feb. 10 by the Clinton City Council. It shares this area with the Hampton Inn & Suites, Fatz, Arby's, Zaxby's, Citgo and BP, the City of Clinton's second spec building; the Clinton Commerce Park, Technology Way, General Electric research facility; and the SC Department of Transportation's maintenance shed. Nearby is a city-developed commercial site and the Millers Fork Trail.

Photo by Vic MacDonald



At left, a preliminary logo for The Capital Initiative penny sales-tax effort was unveiled last year during a community meeting at The Ridge in Laurens. The Laurens County Council, and the municipalities named a committee which now is studying projects. The local-option sales tax, if approved by voters for an 8-year term, can be spent only on designated capital projects and equipment - never on salaries. Projects proposed to date include: Infrastructure Improvements for the City of Clinton, a new County Public Library for the Clinton-Joanna-Cross Hill region (site to be determined), more renovations for the Historic Courthouse in downtown Laurens, an Agriculture Arena-Offices Building to promote Agri-Tourism, and a new Terminal at the Laurens County Airport. These projects must have nearly precise dollar amounts and firm locations before they can be considered by The Capital Initiative Commission - this panel will write a ballot question and put it to the Laurens County voters in the Nov. 3, 2020, General Election (also a presidential, congressional and county offices election). - Vic MacDonald

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Gray Court is nestled in the northwest corner of Laurens County. Originally named Dorroh or Dorrohville in honor of a local family, the name was changed to Gray Court on October 17, 1899, and the new town was chartered three days later. Gray Court has a population of 1,021 residents.

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